



News from the Friends of Sparrow Lake Camp - 2008

Everyone is welcome to join the Friends of Sparrow Lake Camp, a group of volunteers who care about the future of Sparrow Lake Camp.

Our Friends of Sparrow Lake Camp list has continued to grow over the past year. It is a pleasure to hear about camp memories, and the positive impact that church camping has had in helping many grow to be confident caring adults. If you missed our Friends' newsletters from 2006 and 2007, they are available on our website or call and I would be happy to send copies. Please note that contact information is at the bottom of this two-page message.

Sparrow Lake Camp's Centennial 2012 – "Dollar a Year" Fund Sparrow Lake Camp will be 100 years old in 2012 and to mark the occasion we would like to encourage friends, if able, to consider donating a dollar for each year (i.e. \$100.) as a special centennial gift. If we could collect \$100. from every camper, staff member and Board member who has been a part of Sparrow Lake's history, we would be well positioned to get the camp looking its best in time for the centennial celebrations and to bring Sparrow Lake Camp into its next century. Plans are to build two new buildings: 1) a permanent multi-purpose pavilion (\$20,000 estimated cost) and 2) a multi-season youth leadership centre (\$400,000 estimated cost). In addition, many existing camp buildings, some of which were built in the early 1900's, need refurbishing. We also need a building to centralize and house our water pumping and treatment facilities. We would be happy to receive post dated cheques, or periodic payments for any contribution you would be willing to make, to assist with capital improvements. If there is a child in your life, please tell them about your gift to Sparrow Lake Camp and share your reasons for giving back to a place that has touched your life in a positive and meaningful way.

Camp Clean Up Dates – May 24th and October 18th, 2008 Before camp starts, volunteers gather to help get the camp ready for the summer – painting, yard work, unpacking items from storage, and sometimes even taking down or putting up a small building... and we have a lot of fun in the process. Arrive around 9 a.m. and stay until after an evening program, or (for the May 24th clean-up only), stay overnight in a camper cabin and make it a clean-up weekend. In the fall, our work day is normally spent packing things away and getting the camp ready for its winter snooze. Meals are provided on work days so please let us know a week in advance of each date, if you will be attending. Please note that persons under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent and summer camp policies will apply.

Open House at Camp – Sunday, June 29th, 2008 1 – 4 p.m. Come for lunch and meet the Sparrow Lake Camp Board of Directors and some Friends of Sparrow Lake Camp who will be at the BBQs cooking hamburgers and hotdogs. Voluntary donations are requested to help cover costs. Arrange to meet your friends there and come to see what's new and what's still exactly or almost the same.

In preparation for our Centennial, we are collecting stories that have been told time and time again to campers at Sparrow Lake Camp. If you have a legend or story to share, please send it along so that it can be included in a future communication. The following is provided, with apologies to historians.

Princess Rock and Prince Root This is a legend that dates back before any of us were alive and even before the Europeans arrived in North America. The only people who were living here on the site of Sparrow Lake Camp were two tribes of native peoples. There were no buildings or anything on the property back then. The row of trees between cabin 8 and 9 was the boundary between the two native tribes' territories. The two tribes did not get along at all. They fought over animals, how much noise the tribes were making and over territory – both tribes wanted to expand their side so they were constantly at war trying to move the boundary. This story is about a princess who lived on the north

side (where the girls' cabins are) and a prince who lived on the south side of the property (where the boys' cabins are) The prince and the princess had never met as their families were at war throughout their whole lives and they were not allowed to cross the territorial boundary. The princess loved to swim – there were no boats or planes or anything on the lake at that time – she just liked to spend every day in or around the water. One day the Prince from the southern tribe was out fishing on the lake in his canoe and he spotted the most beautiful girl he had ever seen in his whole entire life. She was floating in the water looking up at the clouds. His breath was taken away – she was so beautiful. He fell in love as soon as he saw her. He startled her because she had not seen any one in hours but he managed to talk to her and calm her down. They realized that they had many things in common and they talked all day. Eventually because the sun was going down they had to go home so they agreed that they would meet at the same time the next day in the middle of the lake. They had so much fun talking for hours and hours but knew that their families would never allow them to be friends. So they met secretly day after day for about two years. They agreed that they had fallen in love and wanted to get married. They decided that the only way they could live happily together was to run away and get married somewhere else. They made a plan. Early one morning the prince snuck over to the north side where the princess lived and they started their journey through the woods. Remember there were no roads, so their plan was to follow the shore of the lake until they reached another tribe where they could be accepted as newcomers. Walking in total silence, they started along the shoreline path, past where the dining hall is now. Unfortunately they were wrong in assuming that everyone from both their tribes was asleep. The girl's brother, a prince in the northern tribe, was fishing near the path. He saw them and was furious that a boy from the southern tribe was with his sister. He got out his bow and arrow and tried to kill the boy. Unfortunately the arrow pierced his sister's heart and she died on a rock along the path. Out of respect for the princess, from that day on, anyone walking along the path does not step on that rock, but bows his or her head and says a prayer for the princess. It is considered to be bad luck to step on that rock as the arrow hit the princess, although she was not supposed to be the target. The southern prince did not know what to do when he saw his love killed by the arrow. He knew that he was in enemy territory and that he needed to run away as fast as he could or they would come after him and kill him as well. So he ran further along the water as far as he could until grief overcame him – he sat down and cried for days. Where his tears fell a root came out of the ground and sprouted. The prince returned to that tree every day for years and cried for the princess, his lost love. The tree grew sturdy and strong, watered by the prince's tears. Eventually the prince died and went to heaven where he was reunited with his true love. They lived happily ever after. It is good luck to step on prince root, which is further down the path towards chapel, as the arrow that was meant to hit the Prince missed him and he lived to see a mighty tree grow from the root that sprouted that day when his tears fell on it. The End.

If you would like additional information or would like to make a donation to support camp refurbishment or any other camp project that interests you, please contact:

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MISSION STATEMENT:

Sparrow Lake United Church Camp is a caring, inclusive Christian community providing a quality outdoor camping experience for children and youth in a pristine natural environment.